



March 30, 2016

**The Secretary  
Economy and Infrastructure Standing Committee**

**Road Safety Road Rules 2009 (Overtaking Bicycles) Bill 2015  
Submission in support of minimum passing distance law**

RoadSafe Central Victoria is a not for profit incorporated body working within 5 municipalities in Central Victoria to reduce road trauma for all road users. Our membership includes cycling advocacy groups, Bike Bendigo Inc. and Bike Safe Macedon Ranges. Our safety programs address a number of significant road safety issues affecting all road users and include cyclists' safety interventions. We provide support and fund a major on road safety campaign each year in the Macedon Ranges aimed at raising drivers' awareness to the importance of giving cyclists' a safe passing distance along with cyclist safety programs in schools throughout Central Victoria.

**Amendment: rule 144**

We support the proposed amendment to Road Safety Rule 144 requiring drivers to give a passing distance to bicycle riders of at least one metre at speeds up to 60 kph and 1.5 metres at speeds above 60kph.

We consider that the current rule requiring drivers to give "sufficient" distance fails to protect cyclists because there is no clearly defined measure of what sufficient means. The only way to determine whether there has been a breach is after a cyclist has been struck by a vehicle.

The proposed specific distances inform drivers and police of what actual distance drivers should give and explains clearly the outermost points of vehicles and bicycles from which the distance should be measured. It provides much needed clarity for all drivers, cyclists and police.

We believe it will improve the safety of cyclists because it can be easily understood, provides a measurable safety buffer zone and it is capable of enforcement given the uptake of mobile camera usage by cyclists.

**Amendment: rules 146, 147 and 150**

We support the proposed amendments to allow a driver to cross unbroken lines for the purpose of overtaking a bicycle when safe to do so. These amendments allow for efficient movement of traffic whilst protecting vulnerable road users.

**Consistency with 5 other Australian jurisdictions.**

It is desirable that road safety rules are consistent across Australia. Victoria is currently the only Eastern State that does not have minimum distance passing laws or trials in place. Given that the Queensland 2 year trial is nearing completion there will be valuable data, not yet available to the public, that will assist the Inquiry.

**Education and awareness**

An appropriately funded awareness campaign is essential to educate the public. We recommend that the education campaign include television depicting real life examples of what the required behaviour looks like. It should depict different types of cyclists reflective of the broad cycling community and they should be shown riding in bike lanes, on roads without bike lanes, alone, two abreast and in groups as would be encountered on the road.

The roads depicted should include a mix of unmarked single rural roads, multi lane roads, unbroken lines, and different types of vehicles should be portrayed including commercial vehicles. Drivers should be depicted both waiting patiently, then overtaking when safe including across double lines. We recommend that close attention be given to what has worked well in the other states, in particular, Queensland, Tasmania and South Australia.

The education campaign should also include highly visible on road messaging delivered on well used cycling routes in Victoria. We have found that this educational tool works well for the campaigns we support in our region.

It will be important to deliver the changes as improving the safety of both cyclists and drivers and explain why the changes will benefit both users.

**Enforcement**

It will be important for the police force to inform its members at a local level of the changes so that they can confidently both educate the community and enforce the new laws. Police operating in the jurisdictions where these amendments already exist will be well placed to offer advice on what strategies have been successful.

We thank the Inquiry for the opportunity to make a submission.

John Dingle

Chairperson  
RoadSafe Central Victoria